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Christ and Buddha

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FLOWERS AND GARDENS

FLOWERS AND GARDENS

(A DREAM STRUCTURE)

BY

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TO
THE MASTER Koot Hoomi
WHO SENT THE DREAM

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I

FLOWERS

I HAVE just had a vivid dream, and though I am now thoroughly awake, I am living in that dream still. It was the dream of a strange place and people. I seemed to be part of both as one of its residents, and as I write this now I seem less to be drawing upon my imagination than to be describing what I live myself.

First and foremost certain ideas hover in the air and seem almost tangible. I have been many times in an electric power-house where everywhere motion was the insistent thought and feeling and yet my eye saw not a thing revolve. So in this dream place certain ideas are like the atmospheric pressure round us, invisible and intangible, and yet they seem to pulsate in all that lives. Of these ideas, two stand out pre-eminently ; they are—the Children, and the Aged.

Wherever you go, every man and woman seems as though obsessed with the idea that the state exists for the sake of the children. Neither thoughts of business nor of pleasure are prominent in their minds; the one topic they find fascinating is—How shall we make the children happier than they are now? Every other interest gives way to this; as we look at the paper each morning seeking news of business or of pleasure, of politics, literature or art, according to whichever of

these has the greatest attraction for us, so in this state each morning men and women begin the day with an eager search for whatever new ideas there are in the world for the welfare of the children.

These people do not consider themselves as the state; the thought uppermost in their minds is that the state is made up of the children. All their daily occupations are magnetised by this central thought, all their nation's affairs are directed to this end—the welfare of the children. That

the children should be joyous and happy, not intermittently but every moment of time—this is to them the Law and the Prophets. Their idea of virtue is whatsoever contributes to a child's welfare. As we think of our country and our people as the 'fatherland,' so in exactly contrary fashion these people think of their state as the 'children's land'; as to us patriotism—'father-service'—sums up the duties and virtues of a citizen towards his state, with these people similar virtues are

described in their phrase 'child-service'.

If the elders are thinking continually of the children, equally strange is the thought of the children, who are continually thinking of the aged. The children are taught that there is something mysterious and awe-inspiring in a man or woman past a certain age, when his or her physical powers are declining ; they are taught to think of the aged as we might to-day think of our national heroes, with pride and veneration. It seems

almost as if the children looked upon each utterance of the aged as a pearl of wisdom; certainly the privilege of service to the aged is considered the greatest honour a child can have. Naturally the children love more keenly those of their own generation, or those of the generation above them like their parents and uncles and aunts; and yet it is strange that instinctively they think more of serving those of two or more generations older than themselves.

Of course there is practically little or no physical hardship in this state. After a certain age, all men and women retire from active occupations, for the state thenceforward guarantees to them a life of ease as a reward for their services to it as industrious citizens during their prime of life. But it is not this physical ease of the aged that attracts one's notice ; it is the respect shown to them by the children. As children grow to man's estate, many of them grow to be far cleverer than any in the

older generations, and such children cannot help knowing it; but in spite of this knowledge of theirs there is no intellectual pride that makes them look down on the aged for being less clever. The training as children persists when they grow up in a grave courtesy to the aged and a devotion to their welfare. Each citizen considers as next to the duty to the children his duty to the aged and infirm.

They have a religion but the thought-images are so novel that it is not easy

readily to expound it. Continually the thought of flowers permeates their ideas of what is noble and good. They think of each individual as having a flower within him which is slowly opening. As we speak of the soul of man, they speak of 'the flower in man'. When a person does what is serviceable, they say, 'His flower is opening'; when he dies they say, 'He has seen his flower'. They believe in a Supreme Intelligence guiding all things, but they call Him 'the Flower of Flowers'.

The flowers in nature have for them a significance that they have not for us in this world. Each flower is to them a mirror of some virtue. They think of three great modes in which 'the flower in man' opens, by power, or by wisdom, or by love. Each of these three modes includes within itself hundreds of virtues, and each virtue is mirrored in some flower. Whenever a man, woman or child sees a flower, each senses a meaning in that flower; with one flower it

is renunciation, with another it is humility, with a third it is joyful sacrifice. They feel that the flowers in nature are calling upon the flowers in themselves to open, and they surround themselves with flowers.

All the names for their flowers remind them of phases of life. As we have names like Love-in-a-mist, Love-lies-bleeding, Heart's-ease, so these people have phrases which are the names of their flowers. Kiss-and-be-friends is one of their flowers ; Whispers-sweet is another.

Baby's-smile is a third, and corresponding to our Forget-me-not they have one which is the favourite of sweethearts, which they call Seeking-the-Light. The flower of love is a wild-rose, but they call it Everybody-You; lovers plight their troth by exchanging this flower. Their sacred flower is a cultivated variety of this Everybody-You; it is called Heart's-Flower, and is offered on their altars to the Flower of Flowers.

In a mysterious way they identify childhood with flowers.

Grown-up men and women dig and plant the seeds and train the plants and creepers and do what manual work is needed in gardening ; but they look upon the children as the real gardeners, whose directions must be implicitly followed in all that concerns flowers. The arrangement of the various colours in the flower-beds, the designs in which they are to be planted, what flowers are planted next to what, all these the children direct ; the elders feel that the flowers speak more audibly to the

children than to themselves, and so always consult the children about flowers.

Children and flowers play a principal part in the imagination of the people. As flowers hint to them of virtues, so they believe that each child represents more particularly some one virtue. They are as glad to see a child as we are when we find a flower in the field in springtime after a long dreary winter.

When the course of true love runs smooth and sweethearts marry, it is with a

prayer in the heart that many children may be born to them to bless them by surrounding them with virtues. The parents consider that a child coming to them brings with it two great privileges, one of contemplating a virtue represented by the child, and the other of blossoming in a virtue evoked by its presence among them. One child they say reflects innocence, another candour ; a third is the embodiment of delight in life, and a fourth of the priceless gift of leadership. Humour is

with them one of the virtues, but they consider nothing humorous unless while they smile they feel pity too; here and there they find a child that with its quaint and bright remarks makes them keenly see and feel life in a deeply humorous way, and they note and observe that child and its ways as we might study some budding genius.

Their children, as the best of children will, have their moods, and then it is that the parents feel they must manifest those virtues they

are called upon to grow. When a child is fractious, 'we must grow in patience' is the thought the parents have; even when they fail to be patient, they never blame the child for the irritability they feel. If a child is disobedient, they say to themselves, 'How little we ourselves know of the privilege of obedience; since we have not learnt how to renounce our desires, of course we cannot work on the wills of others through their desires'. And so on with every

manifestation, pleasant and unpleasant, of the children's natures. In the good they see virtues reflected ; in the bad they hear a call to shine out in virtue.

II

GARDENS

THEY think of their state as 'Our Garden'. There is a clear distinction in their minds between good and evil, and they bring their similes of flowers into this subject of ethics also. Now though all flowers are mirrors of virtues, yet they consider some virtues as only suitable to an age that is past, and as hindering and

not helping the age in which they actually live. They distinguish between a useful plant and a weed, though both bear flowers; and when a weed is found in a garden they transplant it to a special place so that it shall not die. Only, they take care that though it shall live, it shall not flower and produce new seeds.

They understand that even weeds have their place in the ladder of evolution, and are links in the great chain of life, and that but for them the higher flowers could not have

been evolved; they look upon weeds as perfectly natural, as having a right to live in their proper place, but not as having a right to propagate in an age that has grown past the weed-age.

They bring this thought into ethics, and so when someone does evil, they say 'That is a weed in his garden; he must transplant it so that it does not injure Our Garden'. There is no resentment of evil; they look upon evil as quite natural, but it is a survival that must not be allowed to take

advantage of present conditions to vampirise upon the vitality that is the due of the true flowers.

They consider themselves put upon their honour always to consider ‘the weed in a man’ as purely an accidental survival, and as no part of the man at the actual moment. Whatever evil he has done, they feel it their duty to think of the man as *not* having done it. Not that they are blind to facts and do not note the consequences of the evil done; but they have a strange

belief that the past is not irrevocable and unchangeable. They believe that the past can be changed, for one and for all. They do not think of atoning for the past by future service; they plan to change the past so that the evil shall not have been done.

The whole thought is so novel and so revolutionary of present conceptions that it is not easy to make it clear. As an instance of what these people do about changing the past, suppose a man has committed a crime; a judge will

decree what he must do in some special kind of service to counterbalance the disservice he has done to the state. There is no idea of punishment in their law; the main idea is that of adjustment, the restoration of a balance disturbed. But while the balance is being restored, while the culprit is actually at work restoring it, all—the judge, the public, the culprit himself—think of the past as *not* having happened, in that particular way, to issue in a disservice. Each on the other hand,

according to his knowledge of the event, thinks over the past, goes back to it incident by incident, and where the elements of disservice appear, thinks of them one by one as *not* appearing, and so not culminating in the crime. Sometimes the culprit knows best why 'the weed' blossomed in him, what were the conditions predisposing its growth; sometimes another knows all this better than the culprit himself. But whoever does know, according to his knowledge, as it were pulls out the threads

in the design that has been woven on the loom of time, and substitutes therefor new threads. This they say is the only real Atonement, for in this way alone is the evil made null and void.

Each individual seems thus to be living not in the present alone, but also in the past, examining the fabric on that part of the loom which we think has been rolled up for ever. He re-lives the past with the stronger character he now has, and in the light of the fuller wisdom that is

now his. As with us our gaze is ever fixed towards a future in which are our hopes, so these people look back and find in the past that they are re-weaving all their comfort and consolation.

They do not think of the future and plan to shape it; they say that 'the flower in man' will grow in its own way, and that its growth must always be beautiful if the past is beautiful. They say that a gardener does not need to press back the petals to make a flower to open;

it will open by itself if at the proper time he has given it what it needs to grow upon. Their thought about the future, here or hereafter, is as follows: 'My Flower will grow according to the way the Flower of Flowers has taught it.'

Loving children as they do, and surrounded as they are by flowers, needless to say these people are extremely intuitive; indeed intuition may be said to be their special characteristic. Sex makes no difference among them in

this respect; both men and women are equally sensitive to what is not manifest to their normal consciousness as present fact or future event. Except for the necessary physiological differences in the bodies, there seems nothing to distinguish a man from a woman so far as modes of thought and feeling are concerned; one sex does not pride itself on its sense, nor does the other consider itself more endowed with sensibility. But what both clearly realise is that there are two kinds

of sense, a common sense, to be applied to familiar and common groupings of events, and an uncommon sense that must be used where all the necessary factors in a problem are not present before the mind. This uncommon sense is the intuition, and they recognise its manifestations in all kinds of ways. Where no intuition flashes, they use normal mental processes; but where once the intuition has manifested they take no account of facts that contradict it, and firmly follow the line

of conduct consonant with what the intuition has told them. They say that the intuition is the recognition by 'the flower in man' of the great Flower of Flowers.

One result of their being so intuitive is that one does not find in them the spirit of criticism. At first glance this seems intellectual apathy, but looking deeper one sees that their tolerance is based upon a profound conviction. They say that 'the flower in man' knows what is its destined future, and will open according

to the law of its being; to criticise how a flower opens is mere presumption. Their observations of plant life here help them in their reasoning. They have noted that the flowers of a species show slight variations of colour and form; and that in a mysterious way one or more of these variations become fixed and so give rise to new species; a variation therefore is not only not unnatural but it is specially to be watched for, since from it may develop a new species. Similarly

they look upon modes of thought and action in others that they cannot explain. Such puzzling people are not considered unbalanced, though they are of course abnormal; but since in abnormality alone is the only hope of advancement, they are more studied than blamed for not moving in existing grooves.

Moreover, with the intuition playing such a prominent part in their lives, each knows by practical experience that when he is following his intuition and flying in what to

him is a straight line, another may see him as most erratic, and perhaps even as not going to his aim at all. Knowing how untrue, and therefore unjust, one is likely to be when one criticises another, they say, 'Watch the flowers grow and learn ; your duty is to open out yourself and not to tell others how to grow'.

The result of this nature of the people is striking ; in one way they are very introspective and thoughtful, but in another way they are quick and full of spontaneity. Even

to old age they carry with them something of the receptivity that children display to new impressions ; young and old have a peculiarly winning smile, the smile of souls that fear nothing, live fully in the moment, and dimly realise their oneness with all that lives.

They have no ambitions and so perhaps are not forceful ; but on the other hand they are perfectly natural and full of grace in thought and feeling. They live their life as flowers live theirs, responding to griefs and joys with a

child-like simplicity ; one might indeed call them only children, but for one thing. In this child-like life of theirs, ‘ the flower in man ’ manifests now and then the utmost perfection of thought and feeling and action. Each such manifestation adds to life a little of what never existed before, for ‘ the flowers ’ then are revealing glimpses of the beauty of the Flower of Flowers.

Compared to us, the people of my dream-state are truly children in some ways, but they are children who have

in each a spark of genius, and each spark differs from all the others. Life with them is like living during the efflorescence of a great art-cycle ; they do not stand apart from life and let it pass them by ; they feel that life is creating through them, and sweetly and simply enter into the spirit of that creation. If for lack of force they are child-like and ' primitive,' on the other hand each is as the founder of a school of art of his own.

III

GARDENERS—THE HEAD

IN this dream-state of mine, there live a small group of persons that the people call the Gardeners. Evidently they are in authority and correspond to our rulers. But as the people think of their state as a Garden, it is natural for them to think of their leaders as Gardeners.

The Gardeners form a class or caste by themselves, and are not quite the child-like souls the rest of the community seem. They are indeed souls of great imagination and force of character, and few in our communities to-day could equal them either in altruism or in idealism. They are but few in number, and all the direction of the affairs of the community is in their hands; they are utterly one-pointed, thinking only of the welfare of those given to their charge. They seem as the fingers of

one great hand, and the people implicitly trust and obey them. They have won this leadership not by force of arms but by force of renunciation. As at the coming of spring the sap flows in trees and plants, and buds burst into leaf and flower, so in the presence of one of the Gardeners men, women, and children seem to blossom in love and wisdom and power. The people know that the Gardeners are a race apart and that their 'Flowers' are in some mysterious way nearer to the Flower of Flowers.

There are two among the Gardeners that stand out as their Captains. They are known in the state as the Head and the Heart. The function of the Head seems to be to give the people the power that is requisite for their work, and that of the Heart to give them the knowledge needed therefor.

This community lives in the world as a small unit among its many nations. The struggle for existence is still the law of life, and the innocent-hearted people of my dream-state

would perish if they were not able to hold their own in the world. Though life within the community is as the growth of flowers, yet there is a stern life to be lived to hold their own so far as other nations are concerned. The growth of commodities for exchange and barter, and the constant struggle to weed out of nature whatsoever is harmful to the community, involve arduous activities, individual as well as national. Yet these activities, unless well-guided, might radically change the

spirit of the people. It is the work of the Head to organise and direct activities such that, while as a state it holds its own in the world, as a community it shall retain the beauties and breathe the scents of a well-ordered garden.

Apart from the organisation of the people's activities, which is carried out under his orders by the Gardeners, the Head breathes into the people a certain power to achieve whatever is planned in the realms of thought or feeling or action. The Head radiates love and

tenderness and sympathy as indeed do all the Gardeners ; but it is recognised by the people that he has also a marvellous gift that is possessed by no one else in the Garden. This quality is that of going direct to an aim, and getting there in spite of all obstacles. Whatever needs to be done, the Head sees at once the most direct method of doing it ; he takes no account of deviations and obstructions, except in a most cursory fashion. He seems like the incarnation of an irresistible

force before which one by one all obstacles are swept aside.

There are times when there lies in the path of the Head an obstacle that is not to be moved by the force at his command; but he does not turn aside to seek an easier way. His action then becomes like that of an electric current which meeting with resistance increases in amperage and finally melts away the obstructing medium. The temporary check and the waste of force involved in removing obstacles seem to make no impression

on the will of the Head ; it is only to him as if, one of his power-houses being destroyed, he had at his command the torrent of a Niagara which he could lead into a hundred power-houses ready for his need.

It is the Head's aim to breathe this spirit of himself into his people. He moves among the people and teaches them how things should be done. Whatever is the occupation of an individual, the Head seems as a master-craftsman in it in the understanding of its principles,

though he achieves his results not by knowledge but by a divine gift he has of turning all things to suit his will. Something of this gift he tries to transfer to the people by training them always to be positive in will before every task offered. ‘I can’ and ‘I cannot’ are phrases of which he does not approve; instead of this negativity, he prefers all to stand positive to life’s forces and say ‘I will’ or ‘I will not,’ according to their judgment and as suits their aim.

The Head does not preach his message, and he seldom explains; his usual method is to give a simple order. It is couched in the fewest possible words and is like a military command. Only, behind the command, there is no threat implied of punishment for disobedience. Yet no one disobeys, whatever is the difficulty and the pain he is sure to find in executing the command.

To be given an order by the Head means everything to whomsoever receives it,

for whoso receives an order receives also from him the power to carry it out. This is the mysterious quality about the Head; as some radiate love and others wisdom, he radiates power. The child that is crying over a broken toy, when the Head consoles him and tells him how to mend it, goes and mends his toy, and feels the mended toy more precious to him now, because it now contains something of himself; the man who is confronted by a task that seems beyond

his powers and is despairing, should but the Head address him, gains an added power of will to plan and to achieve.

Of the men and women in the community, there are few, very few, who instinctively imitate the Head in his electric methods of activity. Mostly they think out and plan how to avoid this obstacle and that, and how to make the most of this or that other circumstance. But all stand in reverent awe of his methods, as though through his action he revealed to them

something of the omnipotent Divinity within them. They study his technique to the best of their ability, and they find a powerful stimulus to the will-aspect of their natures as they note how inevitably his actions conduce in the swiftest and shortest way to achieve what he has in mind. Even if only a few understand him, they all feel this, that contact with him is as if one were brought within an inexhaustible electro-magnetic field, and did one but discover how, then its

magnetism could be changed to power for work. It is the work of the Heart to show the people what particular transformers they must make of their hearts and minds to utilise those forces with which the Head surrounds them night and day.

IV

GARDENERS—THE HEART

IF the action of the Head on his people is as that of electricity, the action of the Heart is as that of sunshine. As the Head radiates power, the Heart radiates wisdom. But this wisdom is not mere knowledge; it is an understanding of all causes, joined to a

profound sympathy, and suffused with a flaming idealism. As the Head gives to his people a power to do, the Heart gives them a power to dream. The Heart broods over the people, making to shine in each the hidden light of the intuition. He plays upon his 'flowers' to make them open, as the sun's rays play on the woods and fields to make them burst into bloom.

The Heart's visible work for the people is to teach them that there is only one way by which they can make of their

thoughts and feelings transformers for the wonderful forces with which the Head surrounds them ; this one way is Loyalty to Work. He tells them that the Flower of Flowers is ever at work in visible and invisible nature ; 'the flower in man' will only open as each tries to imitate the great cosmic Flower. So all must work, for in work is life ; and ideal life is to grow as a flower grows.

According to the Heart, only one thing is needed to grow as a flower grows—dedication

to one's work. This he explains to the people as meaning the realisation that what is essential in life is that one's work should be done according to a certain ideal of work, and not that one should be happy as the doer of it. Happiness always comes with loyalty to work, a happiness that outlives the wearing away of body and brain ; but such happiness is only theirs who through pain and disappointment learn the bitter lesson that it is their work that is important and not themselves. There is no

greater inspiration in life, says the Heart, than to feel that the Flower of Flowers is growing through you; and every time you think first and foremost of your work, and not of the happiness that is yours as the worker, the great cosmic Flower grows. For when 'the flower in man' grows, it is really the Flower of Flowers that is growing in him and through him, for there is but One Life in the Flower of Flowers and 'the flower in man,' and the growth of the two is inseparable.

Each man, woman and child is taught that each moment of the day he or she must grow as the flower grows, for people grow as much when they are at work and at play as when adoring the Flower of Flowers in the temple. So everywhere, whatever is the occupation, each must work to attain to a certain ideal of work; the Heart teaches them what the ideal is for each activity of life. He shows the children that in their play, which is their work, the ideal must be to

forget their little personalities and work for the brilliancy of the game as a whole ; for through them the Flower of Flowers is playing, and it is not the victory of an individual or of a side that the great Flower wants, but the growth of all through play as a flower grows. The Heart similarly teaches the elders that in every art and craft of life, by the fireside and in the field, in the work-room and in the market-place, they must plan not for their personal gains and happinesses, but for the

accomplishment of their work in an ideal way ; then the Flower of Flowers lives through them at the fireside, and works in the field and in the work-room, and in the market-place too traffics through them. This is the ideal of work for one and for all, the only way in which a worker can grow as a flower grows. Whatever is the kind of work whereby ‘the flower in man’ gains experience and wisdom, through that work the Flower of Flowers will grow if only no barriers be put by us in

the way ; and to his awe-struck listeners the Heart further explains that the Flower of Flowers is *seeking* to grow, and that as we need the great Flower for our very life, the Flower of Flowers needs our perfection to be more perfect still.

The Heart too teaches that wherever a worker thinks of his work and not of himself, then there is always enough light within him to show him the next step to take on his way ; if any halts because the path is dark, it

is because he has not been true to his work in the minutes or the hours behind him. Truth, he teaches, is the measuring of each thing by that standard with which it is to be measured; and this measurement is through words or thoughts or feelings. He warns the people never to use words except in their precise significations, and never to describe a thing or a happening except with the utmost precision of which one is capable; from words he leads them to thoughts and

feelings, and instructs them how to be true in both to whatever object is presented to them. Truth of feeling he holds is sympathy with serenity, as truth of thought is judgment with impersonality ; where both exist, there is always present truth in action, which is service. Thus and thus alone, he says, the intuition will not be clouded, for the intuition is the fullest truth about a thing and cannot shine in a man if he is not true in every part of his nature.

Continually the Heart dwells on the perfection that should mark every manifestation of our natures. Perfection he teaches is not a matter of slow or painful acquirement; it is in us as our divine heritage. What more perfect thing is there, he asks, than a child's smile of happiness, or the perfect pose of its body as it sleeps in its mother's arms? None taught it the technique of the Beautiful, and yet the artist seeking to copy it fails. But for the Beautiful being already

in us and of us, we should not see Beauty wherever we go; we are not strangers in Beauty's land; we are its beloved and cherished citizens.

So the Heart instructs his people that Perfection is within ourselves, and will manifest of its own accord, if only we will put no barriers in its way. Let us but refrain from using every word that signifies harm or injury to another, never using any phrase that bears a trace of malice however witty it seems, and slowly

in our speech a perfection will appear; let us but study each thing for the beauty of wisdom and not for happiness, and our thoughts will formulate themselves in beautiful ways; let us but consecrate our acts to the service of our fellow-men, and we shall be perfect in act as is the Flower of Flowers. But woe if once we break these laws; there will then come into our natures a warp that will leave its mark on every word and thought and deed; and many a weary hour

must be spent to undo the past and regain the technique of perfection that is our heritage.

Each that sees the Heart sees in him a reflection of the ideal self of which he dreams. Each feels the Heart understands him, weeps with him and smiles with him, and ever gives him power to look forward to a happy future, however woeful the present seems. All feel this about the Heart, but they do not know why. It is because he lives his life at-oning 'the flowers

in men' with the Flower of Flowers. Unknown to them, in the invisible worlds, he plays many a role ; he lives there a wondrous life of which only the Gardeners know. One moment he is the ideal child, now a boy, now a girl, radiating the essence of the children of all the worlds ; another moment he is the dreaming youth or maid, weaving love-dreams of rosy futures. So too does he live as a loving sister or friend ; and then as the ideal husband or wife, treading the common round

of daily duties but with a perfection not known to men. As lover in every role, as artist in every art, as saint of every creed, he lives the life of men, gathering into himself all their hopes and dreams and despairs, and offering them up to the Flower of Flowers in one flaming offering of love. From the Flower of Flowers there comes to him power to dream on, and as falls the summer rain on thirsty soil, he distributes that power to the myriads in his charge.

V

GARDENERS—HEART'S FLOWER

IN my dream-community the two captains are the Head and the Heart, and they are as the two wings of a great Bird of Heaven that hovers over the people. One other there is whose life and action is also necessary for the welfare of the state. This is one of the

Gardeners known as Heart's Flower.

Heart's Flower is the best beloved of the Heart among all his people, and what his love is to the lover, Heart's Flower is to him, the mirror of all that is lovely and true, the perfection of all that life has to give. Of all in the community, Heart's Flower seems best to know how to grow as a flower grows. Each ideal fashion of growth the people dream of is reflected in Heart's Flower; and all feel in mysterious ways that

they cannot explain that she is as a symbol of them all as they flame in aspiration.

Especially do all who have passed the spring and summer of their life look on Heart's Flower as a symbol of the joys and beauties that spring and summer gave them. Their past begins to flower anew as they gaze at her, and slumbering dreams wake in the imagination once more. It is not strange that Heart's Flower should take charge of all that concerns the aged and the ailing, for she can at-one them with

their dreams better than any other.

Heart's Flower has her message to give, and she gives it with a beauty all her own. She teaches the people that life is truly life only when one reflects in one's life the lives of all the others. It is this mysterious at-one-ment that the Heart makes in the inner worlds as he makes his offering to the Flower of Flowers; it is a similar at-one-ment, but of one another, that Heart's Flower teaches to every man and woman and child.

The intuition that the people normally have gives them a natural sense of unity, and Heart's Flower trains this sense so that out of it proceeds an artistic expression of their everyday life. She teaches them a little of the mystery and ritual of art-creation or at-onement, and shows them how to coin their thoughts and feelings into poems and pictures and songs. Each pure thought and feeling is, according to Heart's Flower, a flower that blooms in the heavenly fields, and that flower has

a perfect form of its own which we can realise down here in some art-form. So each must take a delight in creation, using hand and heart and brain to fashion for his means of at-one-ment the most perfect form which he can find.

Between perfect thought and feeling and the perfect form that is their vehicle, there is an inseparable unity, says Heart's Flower; where the former is, there is the latter also, if we could but see it. That form might perchance

be in the music of words or in a symphony of colour and form; it might perchance be in that magic of music that contains every form and yet transcends all form. If it is given only to a few to see the perfect forms immediately and unerringly, yet it is the privilege of all to gain some glimpses of them always, if they will but be pure.

Purity to Heart's Flower is the gift we may possess of reflecting the best in others. But the reflection must be of their best alone, for since

that best is from the Flower of Flowers it little serves them or us to reflect other than what comes from on high. For such perfect reflection two things are needed, teaches Heart's Flower; they are judgment in selection and wonder in creation. The first means the ability to select for permanent possession only that from our experiences which is typical of all men; our thoughts and feelings are truly ours when there is in them only what exists in the general and nothing that exists

in one particular alone. So if one paints a landscape, Heart's Flower instructs the artist to select from nature before him only those elements that will be seen or sensed in other similar aspects of nature also; if it is a poem, then, says Heart's Flower, sing only of those thought-feelings that belong to all, or only of such personal thought-feelings of yours as your intuition tells you that others have, but cannot give utterance thereto in a fitting art-form.

But whatever is your creation, remember it is not yours when once you have created it, again and again insists Heart's Flower; have no sense of possession in your creation, for if you do, then shall you lose the greatest gift the artist has, the wonder in creation. For in every work of art it is not the artist that creates but the Flower of Flowers; it is this knowledge and realisation that alone makes the artist. If great is the happiness of creation, more

exquisite and wondrous still
is the feeling that it is not
you that have created but
Another.

Round the Heart and Heart's
Flower there grows up a
young generation to help them
in their work of at-one-ment.
As these latter move among
the people, instructing and
inspiring, they are called by
lovely names, Love-light and
Love-longing, Love-lays, Love-
lore and Love-labours. Each
blossoms and diffuses a scent
of his own, Love-light reflect-
ing the countless forms of

love, and Love-longing the white sacrificial flame of love that banishes all darkness; Love-lays sings of the beauty of life and of love, and sheds joyousness wherever he goes. Love-lore is serene with wisdom of every kind for every service, and Love-labours is swift to organise every work of love. And these and Heart's Flower teach the people that it serves men less to create what is new than to think what men think but in a truer way, to feel what men feel

but more purely, and to do what men do but with a greater perfection.

VI

DREAM—OR VISION?

THERE stretches before me as I write a beautiful garden in France; it is early spring and the gardener has not yet thought of mowing the lawn. The grass is carpeted thick with daisies and primulas, for the sun for some days has been shining in a cloudless sky. To-day, after some showers in the night, the sun is shining

once more, and each flower in the lawn is eagerly open to the sunlight, and seems as if exhaling an indescribable delight in life.

I went among the flowers a while ago, feeling keenly the beauty of the picture before me. But swiftly then my thoughts flew to the many cities in the many lands where I have been, where live what to me are more beautiful and more inspiring than any flower, the souls of men. And what pictures then rose before my mind of poverty and misery,

of degradation and despair! Such wastefulness everywhere there seems of the material of human souls, as if flowers fit to adorn a beautiful garden were ground to dust by a ruthless machine.

Then all the swifter I flew back to my dream habitation, and thence looked out again on life to-day, asking of myself, ‘Why cannot the nations be made into gardens where men and women live and grow as flowers grow? Is it impossible, with all the resources at our command to-day, to

turn our cities into *men's-gardens* where they may learn the alphabet of life, as children learn the A. B. C. of thought and feeling in kindergarten—children's gardens ?'

I know how thousands are asking these same questions every day, and how some offer solutions and a few are testing them here and there. But it seems to me that there is one fundamental and intensely practical principle these reformers have not yet seen, and that is that men are not bodies but souls.

Absolutely necessary as are all their reforms, yet their work will fall short of its aim till the very conception of life is changed. For the greatest misery in the world does not come from hunger and thirst and disease; the world's woe comes from the fact that men know not how to live, even if one were to satisfy every physical need. Except for a little religious teaching here and there, which to-day in all religions is more of the letter than of the spirit, no one teaches the citizens of a country

the rudiments of life. Our states legislate more to prevent crime than to foster virtue.

Which of us who has been through school and university can say that they taught us *life*? Do we not learn to read the book of life only after school and college, when we solve for ourselves those problems of the existence of which scarce a hint was given to us? Did our school-masters and professors tell us that life is only truly life as we stand apart from it and use it to serve our souls?

need? When we fall in love, do our statesmen whisper to us the significance of the dream structure we build or how to proceed in the building so that we shall not shatter it with a light blow? When comes the need for the renunciation of our heart's desire so that a work may be done, do our rulers give us their testimony that when we lose ourselves thus we find ourselves to all eternity?

The root of the matter lies in the fact that what we call the 'state'—our laws, our system

of education, our civic ideals —does not touch the intimate and real things of our lives. Why should our statesmen legislate only to curb us as if we were men risen from the ape, and not also to guide us since we are angels as well descended from heaven for a while ? If they plan for us to forget our heredity of shame why do they not also plan to give us remembrance of our heritage of glory ? Our rulers preach to us when we are the brute ; but what battle-cry have they to give us as

we fight in the ranks of idealism?

Slowly I know all this will change, and that there will indeed be men's-gardens where men and women shall grow as the flower grows. But that future cannot come unless dreamers now build dream-structures of it and live in them night and day. What reform has been achieved that was not preceded by hundreds of would-be reformers dreaming of it night and day in thought and word and deed?



As came the dream to me,
I dream it here again, for to
dream true is to usher in
what is planned by Him
whose Dream makes our life
and love. Yet as my heart-
aches and dreams nestle in
One who dreams through me
for my growth and His delight,
you shall know the meaning
of my dream only as you too
come to Him, or to one like
Him. By many paths men
come to Them ; but there is
one path that I have trod and
I know well, and that is to
live in dream habitations.

For to dream is to plan for future service, and the lovelier the dream the greater shall that service be.

L'ENVOI

Word that is true and voice that is kind,
Thought that is just from a selfless mind;
Help that is swift and hurt that is spared,
Grief that is hid and joy that is shared—
These be the flowers that I cull this day,
Smiling at eve in Thy hand to lay.

Hope springing new each morn from hope's grave,
Will that is bent on a world to save;
Love loving many that seeks but One,
Dreams of a future when woe is done—
These be the flowers that I cull this day,
Smiling at eve in Thy hand to lay.

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